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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 002306

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/CM, CA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL CVIS CH

SUBJECT: PRC PROPOSES ISSUING LIMITED NUMBER OF ONE YEAR MULTIPLE ENTRY VISAS TO U.S. SIX-PARTY TALKS DELEGATES

¶1. (U) This is an action request. See para 5.

¶2. (SBU) MFA Office of Korean Peninsula Affairs Deputy Director MA Jia called representatives from the U.S., ROK and Japanese Embassies February 7 to deliver diplomatic notes proposing to issue one-year multiple entry diplomatic visas to four officials from the United States, Japan and ROK who work on Six-Party Talks. In return, China requests the United States, Japan and the ROK issue comparable visas to four PRC officials working on the Six-Party Talks. (See paragraph 4 for the translated note text.) Ma said that Chinese, Russian and DPRK diplomats do not need visas to enter each other's countries. Ma said China is making this offer to make it easier for U.S., Japanese and South Korean officials to travel to China on Six-Party Talks-related business.

¶3. (SBU) Poloff asked if the PRC is requesting that the United States reduce the number of one-year multiple entry visas issued to MFA officials to four, to which a taken aback Ma responded "most definitely not!" Poloff noted that a number of PRC MFA officials who travel frequently to the United States already have one-year multiple entry visas. Poloff noted that by making this offer, China accepts in principle that the PRC can issue such visas and that Beijing is willing to do so when it is in China's interest, but only as a special favor. Undertaking to report the PRC proposal to Washington, Poloff suggested that issuing longer validity multiple entry visas to officials with a clear need for frequent travel should not be viewed as a favor but rather as in the mutual interest of all parties.

¶4. (SBU) Noh agreed with Poloff's position, making the point that four visas are far too few. Suzuki said some of the Japanese delegation members, like MOFA DDG Sasae, already have one-year multiple-entry visas and inquired if China would issue four additional visas. Ma responded that China would issue four visas in total for each country's delegation. Poloff commented that some of the members of the PRC's Six-Party Talks delegation already have one-year multiple entry visas and asked if they would count against the total, to which Ma made clear that the PRC is seeking four additional multiple entry visas to be issued to Asian Affairs Department officials. Ma said she would convey the responses to her superiors.

15. (U) Action Request: Please provide post with points to respond to the Chinese suggestion.

16. (U) Text of diplomatic note:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

(2006) Ministry note 11

The United States Embassy in China,

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China presents its compliments to the U.S. Embassy in China and has the honor to inform it of the following notice:

In order to facilitate the mutual efforts of China and the United States and to promote the process of the Six-Party Talks, China is willing to issue one-year multiple-entry visas during 2006-2007 to four key participants in the Six-Party talks from the U.S. Department of State. The United States is free to decide the recipients.

The Chinese hopes the United States will, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, issue one-year multiple-entry visas during 2006-2007 to four key participants in the Six-Party Talks from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

(complimentary closing)

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(PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs seal)
February 5, 2006, Beijing.
Sedney